

REPORT NO. CS-37024

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REFERENCES

1. Immediately prior to the opening of the Confederation General de Trabajadores Guatemaltecos (CGTG) Congress in Guatemala, a group of prominent Guatemalan Communists met on 28 January 1954, to discuss Party matters. Those present included Jose Manuel FORTUNY, Carlos Manuel PELLEGER, Leonardo CASTILLO F., Jaime DIAZ Rozzotto, Manuel PINTO Usaga, Virgilio GUERRA, Antonio CABRERA, Guillermo Max GONZALEZ, Max SALAZAR, Samuel SIEKAVIZZA, Rolando CALDERON, Tomas YANCOS Mejia, Alfredo GUERRA Borges, Dagoberto VASQUEZ, Humberto AYESTAS, and Ricardo BARRERA.
2. FORTUNY opened the discussion by saying that the political situation faced by the Guatemalan Government was one of great urgency for the Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT, Guatemalan Workers' Party - Communist). PINTO replied that too much liberty had been allowed the press and radio, and that the Party must be more firm if it does not want to fall into enemy hands. He added that all those showing weakness should be expelled from the Party. FORTUNY then said that many members had left the organization of late, particularly during the last three months of 1953. According to FORTUNY, the decline in membership has been alarming, and he believes that some means, such as increasing salaries, must be studied for stopping this trend. He praised the ~~Juventud~~ Juventud Femenil, saying that this group had collaborated better than any other in the pro-peace campaign. Many of the girls in the Juventud Femenil work for the government, and FORTUNY recommended that the Minister of Education allow groups of them to leave work at least once each week for trips into the provinces to discuss social and economic matters with the peasants. PINTO agreed with this suggestion and stated that a training school should be set up for this purpose.
3. Virgilio GUERRA then took the floor and stated that there must be an immediate purging of all members who are not completely dependable, because lately

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there have been many cases of treason in the Army and other branches of the government. FORTUNY agreed with this suggestion, saying that he would present it to ARBENZ for consideration during his interview.

4. PINTO said that a meeting of Communist leaders was held some time ago at the Rincon de Goya in Mexico City. A Party member known as I. J. Bowen used the occasion to take leave of the local group, because he reportedly had received orders from the Soviet Union to go to Panama on 8 February and take charge of "vigilance" of the canal area. Bowen said that he would maintain communications with Guatemala through a contact known as Ronald Stiward, who lives at 10 Av. Norte No. 16, Floristeria Las Acacias. PINTO said that the person living at this address should be watched carefully because he is suspected in Mexico of being an American spy, notwithstanding the fact that he belongs to the Communist Party.
5. During the last days of January 1954, the Central Committee of the PGT agreed to send a note to President ARBENZ asking for the immediate replacement of all Guatemalan diplomatic representatives in Central American countries and Mexico, including those in subordinate positions. It was decided to increase the salaries of heads of Party groups in foreign countries by the amount of 25 quetzales and increase the pay of the rest of the personnel in the exterior by 15 quetzales.
6. A note from Justino A. GUDIEL, PGT agent in San Salvador, to Party headquarters in Guatemala City, covering the week ending 30 January, states that a messenger had just returned from Nicaragua. The latter had been able to determine that boxed merchandise was being unloaded at Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. The large boxes bore markings indicating they contained machinery. The messenger said that he had been able to establish that the crates contained arms which have not left Nicaragua. He also said that there are about 50 United States troops in Nicaragua, all of whom are stationed at the airport. Communications between GUDIEL and the PGT appear to be very good, as one letter dispatched from San Salvador on 4 February 1954 arrived in Party headquarters the same day.
7. On 22 February 1954, immediately prior to the departure of the Guatemalan delegation for the Tenth Inter-American Conference in Caracas, there was a meeting of the delegates and prominent Communists in Guatemala City. Guillermo TORIELLO, Guatemalan Foreign Minister, was present at this meeting, and it was stated that this was the first time he had been seen at PGT headquarters. TORIELLO said that the delegation should not make any moves which would indicate that Guatemala is Communist, but that the issue of non-intervention should be stressed. Later in the evening the group discussed those radio and press elements which were attacking the government, and it was agreed that this matter must be taken up with President ARBENZ. Some means must be found to put a stop to this type of adverse propaganda or at least to restrict it as much as possible. It was pointed out that such news might cause the people to resent the PGT, even though the reports are obviously lies. The group apparently is aware of the activities of the opposition in the exterior, and it is awaiting a surprise from one moment to another.